



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

**Emmons County Public Health**

# Gas and Propane Safety

Flooding is the most common disaster in the U.S. and can cause a variety of problems to urban and rural communities. However, by utilizing these suggestions, you can learn how to stay safe before, during and after a flood.

## **PROPANE TANK SAFETY BEFORE THE FLOOD**

For larger tanks, reinforce them above ground. If your home is on top of a hill, propane tanks are likely protected from flooding. However, if your tank is in an area that floods often:

- Become familiar with the odor of propane, so you instantly recognize it.
- Know where all gas shutoff valves are located.
- Verify the propane tank complies with all LP Gas container distance requirements.
- Ensure the propane tank is not in a location prone to flooding and high water such as next to a dry creek bed.
- Secure the tank with anchoring cables on a solid foundation, such as concrete pads or blocks.
- Ensure the regulator vent is adequately protected.
- If you feel your tank is subject to flotation, contact your propane company for a qualified recommendation.
- Do not tamper with gas supply lines.
- Do not attempt to repair gas appliances. Leave that for the professionals.

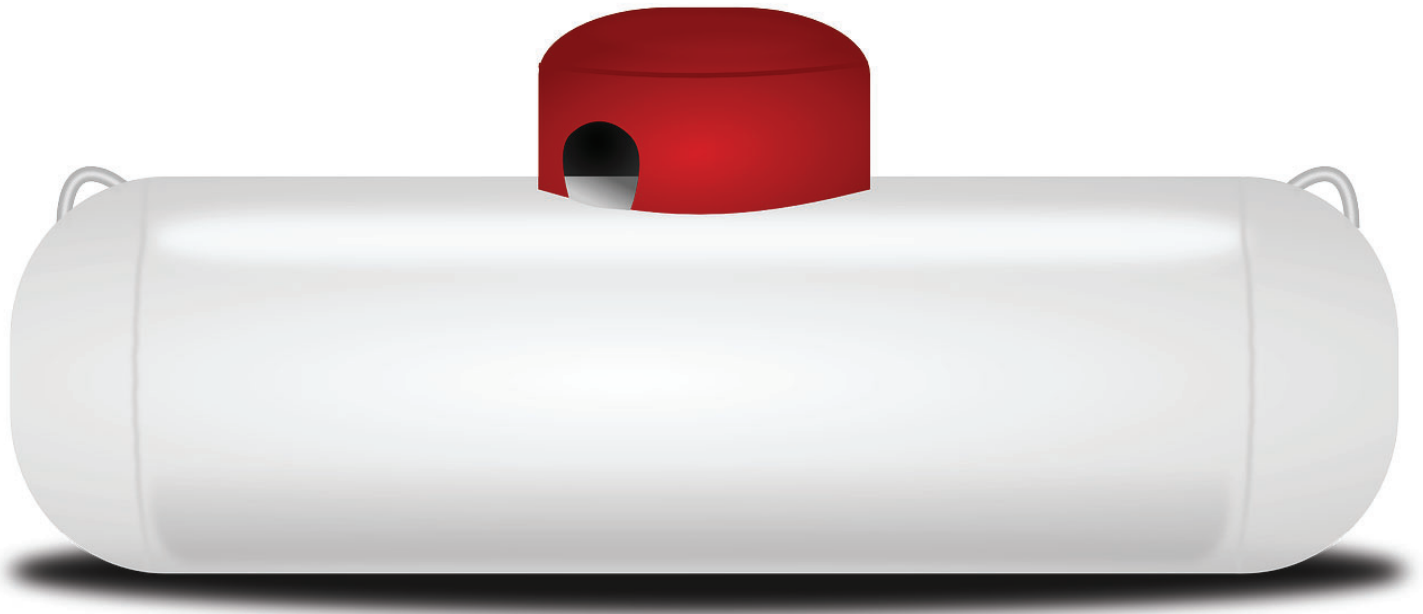
## **DURING A FLOOD**

Paying attention to weather prior to an emergency is your first step in safety as situations like flooding arise:

- Have propane tanks filled when rainy weather is on the way. The tank will not float if water levels are below propane liquid levels.
- Take a picture of your propane tank manufacturer's nameplate. You can use this picture to verify ownership of a tank that has floated away.
- Secure a propane tank to a nearby tree with a chain, rope or cable, running it through the legs lifting lugs of the tank.
- Close the propane tank service valve by turning the hand wheel clockwise.
- Move propane cylinders to a location where they will not be affected by high water.
- Do not relocate cylinders to a garage or indoors.

## **AFTER A FLOOD**

- If you smell gas, leave the area and contact your propane company and/or fire department. Inform them of the situation. Do not use any electric switches/appliances, thermostats or telephones in the affected area.
- Do not open your propane tank service valve. A propane leak test is required before the gas system can be placed back into service.
- If your propane tank has moved, do not move it.
- Notify your propane company if flooding occurred in your area and you were ordered to evacuate.
- Do not re-enter a building until advised to do so.



## TOP 10 WAYS TO KEEP YOUR FAMILY SAFE

1. Create an emergency preparedness plan and review it with your family - Be sure to include propane retailer and emergency services information in your plan. Include step-by-step instructions for turning off propane, electricity and water. If you turn off your propane, contact a professional to inspect your system prior to turning it back on.
2. If you have tanks in flood zones, make sure above- and below-ground tanks are anchored securely - This is required by the National Fire Protection Agency. Contact your propane retailer for more information.
3. Keep adequate supplies of propane in your tank - During or after floods, or other emergencies, propane and other fuel types may not be readily available. Roads leading to the tanks may not be accessible for delivery.
4. If any event threatens your safety, you should shut off the gas - Turn off the main supply valve if it is safe to do so. It is also a good practice to turn off the gas supply valves near individual indoor appliances.
5. Listen to local authorities or media to determine if you need to evacuate your home or property - In the event of an evacuation, use caution upon returning to home or property. If you have any doubts about your safety, leave the area and have it inspected by a professional before re-entry.
6. After the danger has passed, check the area for damaged power lines, gas lines or tanks - Flooding can shift or damage these utilities. If it is dark, use flashlights instead of open flames. Call your local utility company or propane retailer if hazards do exist. Do not attempt repairs of these systems yourself. If you find a propane tank that is not yours, contact your propane retailer or local fire department immediately.
7. Never use outdoor propane appliances (portable heaters, barbecue grills, portable generators) indoors or in enclosed areas, particularly during a power outage - This can result in carbon monoxide poisoning or death.
8. Inspect propane appliances for damage from water, or other circumstances, only when safe to do so - If appliances have electric components exposed to water, this can create fire hazards. Never turn on a light switch, use a power source, or inspect household appliances while standing in water. This can result in electrocution leading to injury or death.
9. Schedule time for a professional technician to inspect your propane system - If you suspect any appliances, equipment or vehicles have been under water or damaged, or you have to turn off your gas supply, contact your propane retailer. Never use or operate appliances, equipment or vehicles until your system has been inspected by a professional. Do not attempt repairs yourself.
10. Exercise good judgment - Do not take any unnecessary risks during flooding or severe weather events that could put yourself, or your family, in danger. Stay calm, and use radios, televisions and telephones to stay informed and connected. If you have any questions, contact your propane retailer or local fire department.

**SOURCE:** Propane101.com, DHSES.NY.Gov, www.blossmangas.com, www.mathesongas.com